

Utah Wing members,

The only constant in life seems to be uncertainty and change.

One part of the Utah Civil Air Patrol that does not change I can assure you, is accomplishment of our missions, education, activities, having fun and all that encompasses Utah CAP is done by our members. While commanders and leaders set direction and goals, it's people like you who get things done. This will never change.

I'm excited to get out of my comfort zone for the next few years and serve as the Utah Wing Commander. Col. Bob Bost has done an outstanding job as commander and that's essentially the reason I was willing to submit my name for consideration. Because members of the wing have and continue to have outstanding values and show great dedication, it's exciting to look forward.

Where are we headed? That's primarily up to you. The Titan Drill Team has set the example and given us a model: To achieve excellence, a TEAM must work together with a common goal and with dedication. It takes hard work. It must be a team effort.

It's easy to sit on the sideline and criticize, and this accomplishes very little. When good things happen, it's people like you making the difference. If members want to complain and shoot arrows at the program, my feeling is to simply ignore them. If members are engaged in the work and find ways to make improvements, I listen. I don't have all the answers and don't pretend to. I like to take notes and learn and listen and help make things better.

I cannot promise that every qualified member will participate in every mission. I cannot promise every squadron with pilots will have an aircraft assigned. I will promise to ask questions such as: Why does a squadron with 10 pilots not have qualified staff to run missions within their geographical area? Or: Why did you recruit 20 new cadets without a support system in place for them so they can rapidly become part of CAP? It's not about numbers, it's about dedication and quality and knowledge and experience.

We're also victim of our own success. You've been noticed! Agencies facing economic stress realize that using a group of well-trained and disciplined volunteers is a good move. We will see increased requests for CAP involvement! How we respond is up to you as this is a team effort.

I received a call last week where an individual demanded that a certain program continue and in a certain way. Admittedly, the program under discussion has been outstanding and should continue. Yet, the individual, while making demands, was unwilling to help. If you want quality programs, be prepared to pitch in and help.

So what's going to change? I don't know. Certainly some members are exhausted and needing to refocus on other areas of CAP interest. That's OK. Others are willing to continue and offer their time and talents. We'll structure the wing staff/organization to use what ever talents and expertise are available. We'll use technology and expertise so we can work "smarter" and still enjoy all that CAP has to offer. We will be safe and follow CAP's regulations and policies! We will follow the established chain of command.

Communication is important to me and one focus will be to better inform members, customers and interested persons about what the Utah Wing is doing. I invite your comments and questions. I invite you to participate and get involved. If you have a request, please do your own homework and offer background as to why your request should be considered. Don't just remain silent or complain, but offer solutions and ways to make things better.

CAP to me is an "action verb." Anyone can sit and watch and complain. Excellence is an attribute of members who dig in and get involved and contribute. These members put egos aside and work together. It's a team and we are that team. If you don't play well in the sandbox, we'll have challenges. Please recall the days you first joined CAP and ponder what kept you in the program. I would say you were given opportunities to participate and that someone helped by showing you the ropes and was your mentor. Every member has the right to have expectations met and be part of CAP. Let's not recruit and then ignore. Let's be kinder and more supportive.

I consider the slate "clean" and really don't want to hear of past offenses and hurts and wrongdoings. Other than a couple of pending actions that are in some official corrective channels, I don't want you to dredge up past events as evidence for predicting future actions. Don't waste my time! You have my trust and support -- so don't give reason to change that view.

If you are serving as a member of wing staff or are in squadron and group leadership, please accept my request to remain in place during the transition. Let me know where you are willing to serve! Please let me know of your desires and interests. You may not be an "expert" but if you're willing to develop expertise, that alone may qualify you for a position you want. Communicate! It's all about developing expertise.

I am sensitive that each of us has friends, families, employment and other demands on our time. Some of you are retired and we all have differing amounts of available time. Let's be considerate in making requests and in understanding that everyone cannot simply stop what they're doing and do CAP things. My wife is supportive but does not expect me to abandon her for CAP events. My employer still expects me to accomplish what they pay me to do. CAP should not cause disharmony for families or adversely impact a job. Situations change -- let's be considerate (and appreciative) of time and expertise offered in service to others as CAP members!

Finally, one of the first CAP publications I read in the months prior to the wing command selection process was CAP Pamphlet 50-2, "Civil Air Patrol Core Values." It's going to be a primary reference for me. (Find it here: http://members.gocivilairpatrol.com/media/cms/u_082503081659.pdf) So here's a challenge to you: In this .pdf file there is a typographical error that I was first to identify, according to the appropriate National CAP staff officer with responsibility for this pamphlet. As you read this, look for the error. The first few of you (cadets included) that (on your own, without help from others) find the same error will be treated to lunch or dinner with me.

Thank you very much for your support and service. If you have concerns and/or questions, please communicate! As I am looking forward for Utah Wing, it is an exciting view.

Sincerely,

Jerry Wellman, Lt. Col., CAP

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